

Message Text

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PAGE 01 USNATO 02378 071952Z
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C O N F I D E N T I A L USNATO 02378

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: NATO, PORG
SUBJECT: NATO SUMMIT AND SSOD

REF: STATE 50652

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SUMMARY: WE SEE MERIT IN AN EARLY EXCHANGE OF VIEWS IN
POLADS REGARDING PUBLIC RELATIONS ASPECTS OF THE SUMMIT/
SSOD COINCIDENCE. ACTION REQUESTED: GUIDANCE ON THE
APPROACH SUGGESTED IN PARA 3 AND 4 BELOW. END SUMMARY.

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1. CANADIAN PERMREP HARDY HAS MENTIONED ON SEVERAL
OCCASIONS THE DESIRABILITY OF CONSULTING IN ADVANCE OF THE
NATO SUMMIT ON HOW TO HANDLE PUBLIC RELATIONS ASPECTS OF
THE COINCIDENCE OF THE SUMMIT AND SSOD.

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2. PER REF A, WE HAVE SUGGESTED ADDING THE SSOD/NATO
SUMMIT RELATIONSHIP TO THE DISARMAMENT EXPERTS AGENDA.
FRENCH POLAD, HOWEVER, SAID PARIS CONSIDERED THE ISSUE
POLITICAL AND BELIEVED IT SHOULD BE DEALT WITH IN POLADS.
NOTING POSTPONEMENT OF THE DISARMAMENT EXPERTS MEETING
UNTIL MAY 2-3, CANADIAN REP HAS URGED EARLIER CONSULTATION
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PAGE 02 USNATO 02378 071952Z

ON SUMMIT/SSOD.

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3. COMMENT: WE BELIEVE EXCHANGE IN POLADS ON PUBLIC
RELATIONS ASPECTS OF THE SSOD/SUMMIT COINCIDENCE WOULD BE
USEFUL, AND SEAN MCBRIDE'S REMARKS (TRANSMITTED BELOW)
SUGGESTS THE NEED FOR AT LEAST A WATCHING BRIEF ON ACCUS-
ATIONS ABOUT THE SUMMIT. WE ALSO THINK SUCH AN EXCHANGE

SHOULD BE NARROWLY FOCUSSED AND NOT GET INTO OR AHEAD OF WASHINGTON'S PLANNING REGARDING THE COMMUNIQUE OR OTHER PUBLIC ASPECTS OF THE SUMMIT ITSELF.

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4. WE WOULD ALSO SUGGEST THAT RESPONSES TO CHARGES ABOUT THE SSOD/SUMMIT COINCIDENCE COULD NOTE AS APPROPRIATE THAT (A) NATO MINISTERIALS ARE HELD EVERY SPRING AND AUTUMN, SPRING MINISTERIALS ROTATE AMONG NATO CAPITALS, AND THE DECISION ON A 1978 SUMMIT MEETING IN WASHINGTON WAS TAKEN OVER A YEAR AGO WITHOUT REFERENCE TO THE SSOD; (B) THERE IS NO DIRECT RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE SSOD AND THE NATO SUMMIT. AT THE SAME TIME, NATO ALLIES ARE PROUD OF THEIR SUPPORT FOR SERIOUS ARMS CONTROL EFFORTS. IN THEIR DECEMBER 1977 COMMUNIQUE, NATO MINISTERS REAFFIRMED THEIR DETERMINATION TO STRIVE FOR GENUINE MEASURES OF DISARMAMENT AND ARMS CONTROL AND AFFIRMED THEIR INTENTION TO PLAY A CONSTRUCTIVE ROLE IN THE SSOD; (C) PROPAGANDA ATTACKS AGAINST ALLIED DEFENSE EFFORTS AND A MEETING OF THE NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL APPEAR INCOMPATIBLE WITH THE CONSTRUCTIVE, SERIOUS APPROACH THE ALLIES HOPE OTHERS WILL ADOPT TOWARD THE SSOD.

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5. BEGIN TEXT OF A FEBRUARY 28 REUTERS ITEM ON SEAN MCBRIDE AND THE SUMMIT.

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GENEVA: THE NEUTRON BOMB WAS CONDEMNED YESTERDAY BY
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PAGE 03 USNATO 02378 071952Z

DELEGATES AT AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE, WITH FORMER IRISH FOREIGN MINISTER SEAN MACBRIDE URGING NATO TO POSTPONE TALKS ON THE WEAPON'S FUTURE. MC MCBRIDE SAID THE DECISION TO HOLD THE NATO MINISTERIAL MEETING IN MAY AT THE SAME TIME AS A SPECIAL SESSION OF THE U.N. GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON DISARMAMENT COULD BE CONSTRUED AS "AN ATTEMPT BY NATO HAWKS TO SHOW THEIR CONTEMPT FOR THE UNITED NATIONS." MR MCBRIDE WAS PRESIDING AT THE OPENING SESSION OF A FOUR-DAY CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT ATTENDED BY SOME 700 REPRESENTATIVES OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS. MR. MCBRIDE SAID THE NATO MEETING WAS BEING CONVENED IN WASHINGTON AT THE END OF MAY "TO DECIDE ON THE DEVELOPMENT AND DEPLOYMENT OF THE NEUTRON BOMB THROUGHOUT WESTERN EUROPE." THIS WAS DENIED BY NATO OFFICIALS IN BRUSSELS. THEY SAID THE TIMING OF THE SUMMIT - "A PURE COINCIDENCE" - WAS SET A YEAR AGO, AS WAS THE AGENDA. BENNETT

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